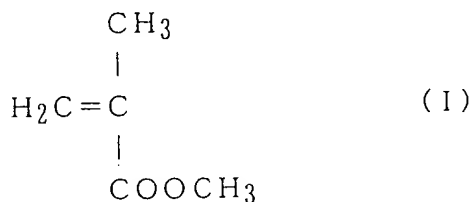


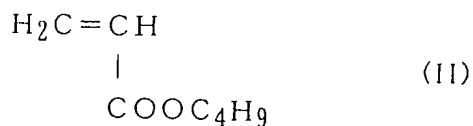
IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 12 without prejudice or disclaimer, and amend claim 1 as follows:

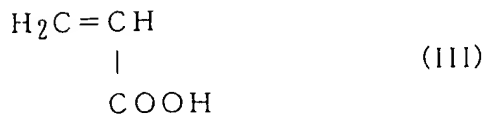
Claim 1 (Currently amended): A water-based ink composition for ink-jet printing, containing at least pigment, a dispersing resin, a surface active agent, an organic solvent and water, in which said pigment is dispersed with said dispersing resin, characterized in that said dispersing resin comprises a copolymer (I) prepared by polymerizing a monomer mixture (I) containing a monomer (A) represented by the formula (I):



a monomer (B) represented by the formula (II):

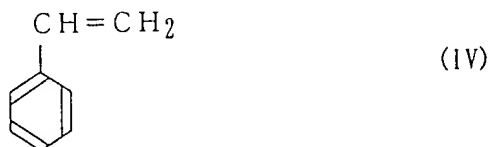


and a monomer (C) represented by the formula (III):

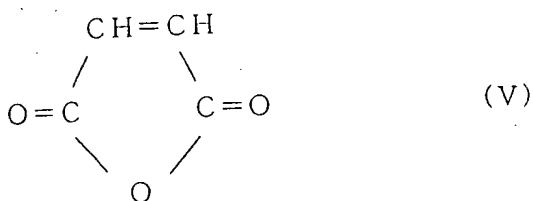


; and

a copolymer (II) prepared by polymerizing a monomer mixture (II)
containing a monomer (D) represented by the formula (IV):



and a monomer (E) represented by the formula (V):

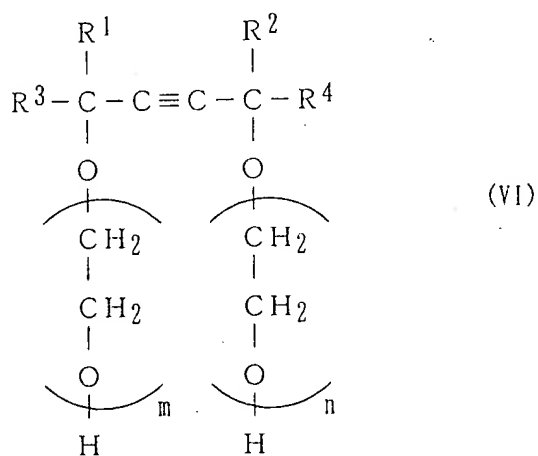


, wherein said copolymer (II) is half-esterified.

Claim 2 (Original): The water-based ink composition of Claim 1, wherein the weight ratio of said copolymer (I) to said copolymer (II) (copolymer (I)/copolymer (II)) is 20/80 to 98/2, and both copolymer (I) and copolymer (II) are random copolymers.

Claim 3 (Original): The water-based ink composition of Claim 1, wherein the acid value based on carboxyl group of said copolymer (I) is 30 to 100 KOHmg/g, and the acid value based on carboxyl group of copolymer (II) is 100 to 250 KOHmg/g.

Claim 4 (Original): The water-based ink composition of Claim 1, wherein said surface active agent is a compound represented by the formula (VI):



in which each of R^1 , R^2 , R^3 and R^4 is independently an alkyl group having 1 to 5 carbon atoms, and the total of m and n is an integer of 1 to 40.

Claim 5 (Original): The water-based ink composition of Claim 1, wherein a penetrating solvent is further contained.

Claim 6 (Original): The water-based ink composition of Claim 5, wherein said penetrating solvent is an alkyl ether of polyvalent alcohol.

Claim 7 (Original): The water-based ink composition of Claim 6, wherein said alkyl ether of polyvalent alcohol is at least one member selected from the group consisting of ethylene glycol monomethyl ether, ethylene glycol monobutyl ether, diethylene glycol monomethyl ether, diethylene glycol monethyl ether, diethylene glycol monobutyl ether, triethylene glycol monomethyl ether, triethylene glycol monoethyl ether and triethylene glycol monobutyl ether.

Claim 8 (Original): The water-based ink composition of Claim 1, wherein sugar is further contained.

Claim 9 (Original): The water-based ink composition of Claim 1, wherein the volume average particle size of dispersed pigment is at most 200 nm, and coarse particles having volume particle size of at least 500 nm are not contained.

Claim 10 (Original): An ink-jet printing method characterized by discharging drops of the water-based ink composition for ink-jet printing of Claim 1, fixing said drops to a medium for printing, and printing.

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. **09/916,316**
Response dated May 17, 2004
Reply to OA of **February 19, 2004**

Claim 11 (Original): A printed matter produced by the ink-jet printing method of Claim 10.

Claim 12 (Canceled):